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HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

—OF—

INA HAYES,

—THE—

COTTON GIRL.

A WONDERFUL PHENOMENON.

PRICE 50 CENTS.

Jamison



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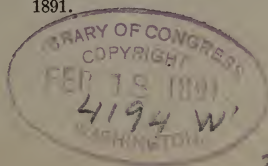
A WONDERFUL PHENOMENON.

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By P. B. Jamison.
M.

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INTRODUCTION.

In order to preserve the history of a wonderful case that has caused more than local interest, and which has proven inexplicable to the medical fraternity and many learned men who have given the case their attention, the writer has carefully collected the evidence of persons whose truthfulness cannot be questioned and now presents a plain statement of the facts to the public. The time when people heard of and witnessed strange things and ascribed them to witchcraft and voodooism, belongs to the remote past and in the present,

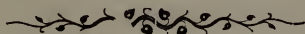
science throws its light upon mysteries and makes all things plain. But occasionally there are freaks of nature and events that create more than a nine days wonder, and are allowed to pass without investigation or explanation. When anything is brought before the public which has baffled the skill of wise men and is wrapped in mystery it should be carefully considered and treated according to the merit of the case.

This is not a novel, but one of those strange facts which are sometimes stranger than fiction. The history is plainly told with a higher motive than to make the simple and superstitious shudder. There is no romance told in the pages of this book, but the history of a marvelous case is related.

Very Truly,

P. G. JAMISON.

THE COTTON GIRL.



Near Greenfield, Tennessee, farmer Hayes and his family lived for years a quiet, peaceful, industrious life. Though he worked hard, tilling the soil and earning his bread by the sweat of his brow, he possessed much natural ability, a fair education and a mind well stored with useful information. The products of his farm gained a reputation for being the best in the market and fortune seemed to smile upon him and life rolled on in unruffled placidity. The people who lived in the surrounding country respected farmer Hayes and his family and in their quiet rural home, away from the glare and excitement of city life, they were as happy

as it is possible for mortals to be on this mundane sphere. A son brought his wife to the old homestead and later a little granddaughter made still brighter the old farmhouse. The child seemed unusually bright and when her father died she was the comfort, as well as pride of her old grandfather's life. It is said that some malicious person predicted for the babe a future of sorrow and affliction and said she would prove a great care and source of much grief to her parents. But who shall say such predictions can influence the future of an innocent child? Ages ago people believed in the "evil eye" and charms were invoked to preserve children from fearful fates. But the belief in such things disappeared as the world became more enlightened and such superstitions and fancies were relegated to the past. But the child was destined to be afflicted in a way that would blight her life and throw a shadow over the home that was so bright during her early

childhood. Fate decreed that her life should be a subject for wise men to ponder on and physicians to rack their brains in vain to diagnose her strange malady. Every mortal must play his or her part in life's drama and it fell to the lot of Ina Hayes to suffer and be the subject of a terrible affliction that recalls the tales of witchcraft and "spells" of the day of Joan of Arc. But unlike the people who lived in that age, the public of this period do not shrink in terror from the mysterious but seek to unravel and explain the causes that bring about wonderful things. It is no longer necessary to reach out into the realm of fiction to find subjects to astonish and interest, for in every day life there are events and creations upon which volumes might be written and the half not told and ages might be spent pondering on the causes and yet leave much to learn.

Last June farmer Hayes' home became the scene of so many strange occurrences it became

a place full of interest and people from far and near visited it to learn if rumor had told correctly the happenings or if they had been distorted and exaggerated from the ordinary. Large pieces of cotton were every morning found strewn about the house both inside and out, yet no one was heard moving about the premises during the hours devoted to rest and sleep. No sane person could claim it was done by some practical joker, for they would soon have tired of a joke wherein there was no laugh and when the family became first puzzled, then alarmed, the joker would have been detected. But as silently as the snow falls from the clouds the cotton was strewn over the Hayes home and remained substantial proof in daylight that some one or something had poured the fleecy stuff in and about the building during the night. Then a bedquilt that was hung out near the house to air, disappeared, and after a long search it was found several hundred yards from

the house spread out in a cotton patch. There had been no high wind to carry it away and it was hung above the reach of any animal that might have mischievously taken it to the cotton field. Mrs. Hayes arose one morning to find her shoes and stockings had been carried off while she slept. Later they were found in the cellar; but by whom removed none can tell. Curious sounds began to be heard about the place, and life became full of terror to the inmates of the Hayes home. But they were not prone to ascribe unaccountable things to supernatural agencies and, lest they be ridiculed, refrained for a long time from mentioning the strange occurrences that disturbed them. But as if some unseen power was bent on bringing dire trouble on the quiet family and put them before the public, their granddaughter Ina become fearfully afflicted. She was between twelve and thirteen years old and until she succumbed to her

affliction was a healthy, ruddy, bright girl, who, full of life and strength gave no thought to superstitions or uncanny subjects. One day she claimed a cat followed her, and continued to try to call the attention of others to the feline, but in vain, it was apparent only to the girl. Her grandparents laughed at her and tried to convince her that she was the victim of an optical illusion or freak of imagination. The following two or three days she claimed to be followed by different animals and when she found she alone could see them she seemed terror stricken. The delusion, or whatever it was, preyed on her mind and she grew pale and weak. At night she could not sleep, vowing a skeleton stood by her bedside driving all hope of slumber away. Her relatives became alarmed and tried by every means to dispel the fancies that seemed to be causing Ina so much distress, but they were powerless to change her belief that she was followed by strange beings

and she steadfastly affirmed their presence. One morning her mother entered her room and was startled to see the head of her daughter enveloped in cotton. The appearance was strikingly like some corpse prepared for shipment to some distant place and the sudden shock to the mother who had grieved and worried much about her child's fancies and growing weakness, fainted. Ina was aroused by the alarmed household, but to their questions as to the cause of the strange condition in which she was found, could give no information. But throughout the day one convulsion after another followed in quick succession, and after each, pieces of cotton appeared on her throat. She claimed a strange looking woman stood by her beside and tried to choke her by placing cotton on her throat. She seemed to suffer intensely and as nothing they could do relieved her and she continued to be convulsed by strange paroxysms, Dr. Moore, a neighboring

physician was called, but after treating her for three weeks and failing to afford her any relief he gave up the case. At times Ina claimed the apparition was on her knees and at such times she screamed with pain and seemed to endure the greatest agony, her toes would draw under and though several persons tried to straighten them, it was without avail. The news of the strange affliction that had befallen Ina Hayes spread throughout the country and crowds of persons called to see the unfortunate girl. Some laughed at her and believed she was acting a part, trying to deceive people for some ultimate gain. Others regarded the matter more seriously and thus opinion was divided. The family who had always lead a quiet, secluded life, were the observed of all observers. Their home was invaded by the curious who often laughed at and scorned to believe the suffering of the prostrate girl real. She became a source of interest and a study to some, a terror to others and to a few an object of ridicule.

There was no possible gain for the girl to act upon the credulity of people as a wonder, she was the sufferer, and as such deserved sympathy. All the pleasures usually looked forward to by young girls just budding into womanhood, faded from her and she realized with sorrow, that a great blight had fallen upon her life, perchance to cut it off e'er it reached its prime, perhaps to bring years of suffering and social ostracism. Those who took a serious view of the matter realized that the girl could gain nothing, but lose what she must prize as other girls do, and were convinced some great mystery was there. Newspapers reported it to the world and people from all over the land felt an interest in Ina Haye's and marveled at her affliction. Some believed her bewitched and thought the person who wielded the evil power over her should be ferretted out and punished as in days of yore. The old New England law was remembered and many wished it might be

applied, which read "Article III. Witchcraft, which is fellowship by covenant with a familiar spirit, to be punished with death. IV. Consulters with witches not to be tolerated, but either to be cut off by death or banishment or other suitable punishment." Such laws have long been extinct yet the greatest legal writers of latter days have not argued against the existence of witchcraft. Coke, Bacon and Hale admitted the possibility of such a crime and Blackstone said: "Its exclusion from the list of crimes was not to be understood as implying a denial of the possibility of such an offense." The case of Ina Hayes, is to say the least a remarkable one. History gives many wonderful cases that were believed then to be caused by witchcraft, but there have been few cases on record in the last century so deserving of study as an unaccountable wonder as the case of Ina Hayes. The wonderful trial of 1664-65 is hardly more startling—the Encyclopedia Britannica

says of it: "Two widows named Rose Cullender and Annie Duny were accused of bewitching young children. The main points of the evidence were these. There had been a quarrel between the accused and the parents of the children and the accused had uttered threats against them. The children fell into fits and vomited crooked pins, and once one of them vomited a two penny nail with a broad head. They cried out the name of the accused in their fits; they could not pronounce the words "Lord," "Jesus," or "Christ" in reading but when they came to "Satan" or "Devil," they said "this bites, but makes me speak it right well." One of the children fell into a swoon after being suckled by one of the accused, and out of the child's blanket fell a great toad which exploded in the fire like gunpowder and immediately afterward the alleged witch was seen sitting at home maimed and scorched. Evidence of finding the witches' mark was given, and then

evidence of reputation, viz., that the accused besides themselves being accounted witches, had had some of their kindred condemned as such. A farmer swore that when his cart once touched Cullenders house it overturned continually and they could not get it home. Sir Thomas Browne testified that the swooning fits were natural, heightened to great excess by the subtlety of the devil co-operating with the witches. The Chief Baron in his summing up said that there were such creatures as witches were undoubted, for the Scripture affirmed it and the wisdom of nations provided laws against such persons. The report alleges that after the conviction of the accused the children immediately recovered.

The above case with its testimony, verdict and effect has been preserved by history and is an undisputed fact. If such wonderful powers could be wielded over the innocent by evil minded persons in that age, why not now?

Human nature is the same and the best authorities claim the supremacy of strong minds over weaker ones. The affliction of Ina Hayes is equally as terrible as the children who suffered over two hundred years ago because of the enmity of a wicked woman for their parents.

The newspapers [from north, south, east and west have taken up this last unexplained wonder and have freely commented on it. The following is taken from the Sunday News at Baltimore, Md.: "The case of Ina Hayes, of Greenfield, Tennessee, still continues to be discussed in that part of the South and now some of the Northern papers have taken it up for discussion, for nothing since the first wrappings of the Fox girls at Ro hester has created a greater sensation."

The girl who is the subject of this story is quite a good looking person, stoutly built and well formed and a perfect specimen of the blonde. She seems to be in good spirits and at

times appears as a girl taking a lounge, though the family say she is gradually loosing flesh. She has had some school advantages and good natural mental powers, and no sign of imbecility whatever. Not long ago a party of ladies and gentlemen visited the Hayes family for the purpose of investigating the case that had created such a sensation, and, using their own language, "to see if the story of the cotton was true or some enterprising romance." The girl was lying on a trundle bed near the fire playing with a harp. She was cleanly but plainly dressed, and her surroundings, though homely were neat and scrupulously clean. They said: "We gave the subject and surroundings the closest investigation, and we found no cotton concealed or unconcealed until the girl was attacked with one of her spells. She screamed and plead most piteously for help for a short time, then cotton appeared on her throat."

The same writer in another report says

while present the girl had three attacks and after each, cotton in no stinted amount was found on her throat, and during the convulsions she seemed to suffer intensely, but afterward, smiled and conversed as if there was nothing the matter with her. When questioned as to how she felt while so strangely agitated, she replied that she felt as if some one was choking her and cutting her throat. The only thing that has ever given her any relief has been a brisk rubbing. At times the cotton seems to exude from the pores of the skin and can be drawn from her throat in long strands. Her mind wanders while in these strange paroxysms and she calls to those around her to see the forms her fancy has conceived. Sometimes it is animals she claims to see, but oftener it is women, one in particular, dressed in yellow, seems to trouble her very much.

Another peculiar feature of the case is her

wonderful sense of hearing. Whether her spirit leaves its earthly tenement for brief periods and travels over space, seeing and hearing what occurs at places far away from where her suffering body lies, or whether her hearing has been made so wonderfully acute, is impossible to say. But several instances of knowledge of noises and conversations that occurred miles away has happened, while in the strange state for which no name can be fitly or correctly applied. Her face will assume the expression occasionally of one listening intently and she will then repeat what she seems to hear and when she tells from whence the sounds proceed, an investigation has invariably proven that she related verbatim what was said, sometime miles away. This cannot be called any slight of hand performance, as the appearance of cotton on her throat has been termed but it is but one of many proofs that Ina Hayes is under some spell for which man cannot account. Wonders

will never cease, has been said, and truly. Science may tell when certain things will make the elements war and storms sweep over the land; it can bring the lance points of the army of stars that gleam overhead near enough to tell they are planets, worlds like our own, perhaps inhabited with beings like ourselves; it can tell us when comets and new heavenly bodies will be brought within our range of vision; yet there are things science may not yet make clear. There are questions and problems upon which the brains of mighty millions are at work trying to solve satisfactorily, yet nations will be born and die and yet there will be wonders which will be new and incomprehensible.

The Hayes family have not announced to the world that Ina was a wonder and then closed their doors to all investigation. With becoming modesty they at first, sought to shun public scrutiny and criticism. They did not wish their home bereft of the privacy and

seclusion which is sacred to that charmed circle, and for a while they did not say anything of the strange occurrences that marred their peace. But when Ina became afflicted in such a strange manner, it became necessary to call medical assistance and to seek aid and relief for her from any source where it might be procured. The news spread rapidly throughout the neighborhood, then the state and now the interest of a nation is turned to the unpretending home and girl. Once public criticism was commenced, the relatives of Ina Hayes courted a close investigation of the subject, for they did not care to be accused of practicing deception. They do not ask people to believe what has been told of this case but they say to one and all "come and see." Many have called and studied the case and have been compelled to admit it the most wonderful thing they have every seen. Physicians have gone to the

Hayes' home with all the knowledge of medicine to assist them, determined to diagnose the case, and have been compelled to confess beyond their comprehension and beyond the pale of medical science. Wise men who would laugh at the superstitions of many have carefully investigated the wonderful exhibitions and have confessed that it savors of the supernatural and must be classed among the things which cannot be explained. Spiritualists all over the land are deeply interested in Ina Hayes and many believe her a powerful medium who will be the means of convincing thousands that there is communication with the spirit world beyond. What new and startling things it may be her fate to reveal no one can tell, but time will doubtless prove that she has many powers beyond the comprehension of her fellow beings.

Numbers of people who have lived near the Hayes family for years and have known Ina

since she was a child and have given her affliction their attention, are willing to vouch for the truthfulness of all that has been asserted in this book. There have been some reports made by persons but only the evidence has been given in a court of justice and sworn to as "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." Mr. Lee Heath, Allen Sharp and W. T. Jones, who live near Greenfield, Tennessee, have expressed their willingness to testify to a fact that has been claimed and they are men whose veracity cannot be questioned. The old grandfather of the afflicted girl, who has lived three score and ten years, while grieving very much about the unfortunate affliction of his grand daughter, takes a sensible view of the matter, stares the inevitable in the face, invites investigation and stands ready to protect the innocent sufferer.

Mr. Lee Heath, who lives near the Hayes farm, says when he first heard the rumor about

the affliction of his neighbor's grand-daughter he was somewhat skeptical, yet he knew the family were honest and intelligent and he could see no reason why they would care to deceive people. He determined to call and convince himself. He thought perhaps the cotton on her throat was taken from the bed-clothes while she was in convulsions. He stood by her bedside and watched the girl closely. When the spell came upon her he put his hand upon her throat and when he removed it there was a large piece of cotton there. He was amazed and mystified and says it was the most wonderful thing he ever witnessed. On October the eleventh he received the following letter from Mrs. E. S. Sargin, Baltimore, Md.:

“Dear Sir,—Please pardon me for troubling you, but my curiosity is very much excited over the enclosed article contributed by ‘Ruthiel’ to the Sunday News. I have been very much interested in some of his articles but the enclosed strikes me as such rank nonsense,

I determined to write you, to whom he referred as one of his endorsers. I wish to know if the story is really an authentic one, or only to be classed with the many newspaper fallacies we see. Such a person as Mr. Lee Heath may not be in existence for all I know and so I write to learn and to find out if your endorsement is a reality. By complying you will confer a favor."

Mr. Heath replied to the above stating that the statement of Ina Haye's strange case had not been exaggerated. There is no need to add anything to make the case marvelous; there is enough in the real facts

Some one advised that Ina be carried across running water as that was believed to be a cure for certain spells. The relatives of the girl, willing to do anything, no matter how unreasonable it seemed, at once prepared to try the effect and she was taken across a stream and to the home of Mr. Reed, one of their friends. She remained there several days and her host says there was rapping and strange

noises at times and the convulsions and appearance of cotton on her throat continued.

Mrs. Warlicks, the proprietress of the Warlick Hotel at Greenfield, was interviewed and stated that she had called on the girl and watched the symptoms and strange manifestations closely and that it was a great mystery to her. She said she had answered so many questions about the case and had been laughed at for believing it real, by so many who had not seen the girl, she felt some hesitancy about giving her testimony.

People have visited the Hayes home in crowds and had the family desired to make money out of the girl's affliction, it would not have been a hard matter to have made hundreds of dollars in a short time. But they scorned the idea, willing instead, to give all their worldly goods in exchange for the peace and happiness that once prevailed their home. Many superstitious persons feared to approach

them lest they too might fall under some evil spell.

At the suggestion of a friend who told them to follow the advice given they tried a very novel remedy with strange results. A tree was given the persons named and seven persons surrounded it with switches and whipped it. Cotton appeared all over the tree and struck terror to the hearts of those who saw it, for they knew it was not put there by any human agency. The girl, however, was not benefitted.

One of the most peculiar of all of these remarkable manifestations occurred upon one occasion when Ina was going to the house of one of their neighbors a few miles away, riding on horseback, behind her grandfather. She had a number of the paroxysms while on the journey, and Mr. Hayes found rolls and wads of cotton sticking to his back, on his shoulders, on his hat, in his pockets, and he asserts that

he frequently saw quantities of it fall from his own person, as well as from the person of the girl, into the road as they passed along. He also says that upon many occasions the cotton has fallen upon him and other members of the family while they were engaged upon their usual avocations about the little farm or humble abode, always, however, when Ina was near them, but they never suffered any inconvenience from these showers.

Once he and the strangely affected girl started to go to a well which was about one hundred yards from the house. The journey there was without special incident, but when they had filled their buckets and were returning Ina said that she could see the strange apparition that had hounded her so long standing on a high black-oak stump, in the yard and near the gate. Close to the stump grows a tall hickory sapling, probably six inches in diameter. Upon this sapling she declared that the

singular thing—being, spirit, hobgoblin or whatever name it may be called by—was placing wads of cotton similar in all respects to that which exuded from her own person. Sure enough when Mr. Hayes got near enough to see them, he found quite large bales of the fibre adhering to the small tree, and was positive that the girl had not left his side, and that no other human being had been near it since they passed it a few moments before, when it stood there in its normal condition, as free from cotton as a cotton stalk is free from hickory nuts.

Mrs. Allen Sharp, a lady who lives near the Hayes family, has witnessed many of the phenomena, and will cheerfully give any information to those who are seeking for the truth. Her postoffice address is Greenfield, Tenn., and was with the girl when she went upon a journey that will be told of later, and relates a number of instances that are remarkable, to say the least of them, and says that while on the

road Ina had several of her "spells" and that at each time she would complain that the apparition was following them. After these paroxysms had passed off she would declare that she could still see "the thing," and that it had gone on ahead and was in the middle of the wagon road. At other times she would try to point out to Mr. Sharp something that she declared looked like a great rooster sailing in the air directly ahead of them, and expressed a fear lest it should reach their destination before them, and await their coming to afflict her again. Mr. Reed, to whose house the party was going, (as has already been stated) says that before their arrival he and his family could hear strange rappings, showing conclusively that the power that was exerting itself upon the girl had preceded her there. He puts no faith in the story of witchcraft, though frankly admitting that while she was under his roof the noises continued. He also affirms that he

saw the other remarkable manifestation—the exuding of cotton from the girl's person—with his own eyes and stood by her, with his hands upon her throat while she was suffering from one of the paroxisms, and when it had passed off he found under his hand the customary roll of cotton. While not admitting for a moment the supernatural aspect of the case, he candidly says he does not know what else to ascribe it to. He says he knows Mr. Sharp to be an honest, straight-forward man, who possesses the esteem of his neighbors, and whose veracity is unquestioned, and that he would not allow any trickery or humbugery to go on in his house, nor by any one over whom he had any control, therefore he is willing to believe that what Mr. Sharp says of this strange case, really occurred. The author feels perfectly safe in saying that Mr. Sharp will answer all questions asked of him, and that those

answers will be confirmatory of the facts as they are stated in the preceeding pages.

The visit to Kentucky proving unavailing, failing utterly to do the girl any good, she was taken home again, where the strange things continue to occur. Mrs. Hayes declared that she was perfectly satisfied that it was witchery, and nothing else, that ailed the poor child. In this she could scarcely be blamed. Did she not see with her own eyes things done that were incomprehensible? Things that neither she nor any of her friends or any of the vast number of people who had called at her humble home since these manifestations began, could explain? If not done by human power, it must be by some supernatural one, and as the spirits of one's good friends would not descend to such methods as could only prove annoying to the living—give pain, excite unfavorable comment and cause disagreeable remarks to be made by the unthinking. What

was left for the half-distracted woman to believe except that uncanny witches were inflicting torture upon her grand-daughter? Reference has been made in the preceeding pages to the celebrated "Fox Sisters," and as a proof that such a thing as spiritualism does exist; that it has many firm believers; that Mrs. Hayes may be pardoned for entertaining the same belief, especially so when the manifestations made through those ladies were even less remarkable than those made through Ina Hayes, we give a short resume of them and their strange career:

The "spirit-rapping" phenomenon began in March, 1848, in the family of John D. Fox, in Hydeville, Wayne county, New York. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Fox, only their two youngest children, Margaret, 12 years old and Kate, 9 years old, were at home when the family was startled by mysterious rappings that were heard nightly upon the floor of one of the bed

rooms, and sometimes in other parts of the house. They endeavored to trace the sounds to their cause, but failed. It is also alleged that a patter of footsteps was sometimes heard, the bed clothes were pulled off, and Kate felt a cold hand passed over her face. On the night of March 31st, when the raps occurred, Kate imitated them by snapping her fingers, and the raps responded by the same number of sounds. Kate said: "Now, do as I do; count 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6," at the same time striking her hands together. The same number of raps responded, and at similar intervals. The mother of the girls then said: "Count 10;" and 10 distinct raps were heard. "Count 15," and that number of sounds followed. She then said: "Tell me the age of Cathy (the youngest daughter) by rapping one for each year," and the number of years was rapped correctly. In like manner the ages of each of the four others and then absent children were by request indicated by the invisible agent. Mrs. Fox asked

if it was a human being that was making that noise, and if it was to manifest it by making the same noise. There was no sound. She then said; "If you are a spirit, make two distinct sounds." Two raps were accordingly heard. Three weeks afterwards, it is said, it was made known by raps that the body of a murdered man lay buried in the cellar, and the exact spot was indicated where parts of a human skeleton were actually found. The name of the murdered man was given, and it was learned that five years before such a person had visited the house and had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. After a while the raps occurred only in the presence of the two sisters, Margaret and Kate. The family having removed to Rochester, the raps accompanied them, and new phenomena, including clairvoyance and the movement of ponderable bodies without appreciable agency were developed. In November, 1849, the Fox girls appeared in a public hall, and the phenomena

were freely manifested and subjected to many tests; and a committee appointed for their investigation, after continuing their experiments there and elsewhere for many days, reported that they were unable to trace them to any mundane agency. In May, 1830, the Fox girls arrived in New York; the alleged spiritual manifestations became the subject of extensive newspaper and conversational discussion; their facts were published far and wide; "mediums," through whom they were said to occur, sprang up in different parts of the country, and were multiplied by hundreds and almost by thousands.

Soon after the occurrence of the incident at the well, told of previously, the Hayes family concluded to take the trip to Kentucky, that has also been referred to briefly. Incidents that happened just previous to the starting, and what occurred on the journey and

subsequent, are graphically related by a gentleman, an intimate friend of the Hayes family, as follows:—

“It was about the 27th day of November, 1890, that I first saw Ina Hayes after her strange affliction, though of course I have heard of it, for the case here even then obtained wide-spread notoriety. I had been down in Mississippi in company with Mr. Marion Hayes, and on our way back Mr. Hayes, who had seen her when she was first taken, proposed to stop off and see her again. Much of what had been told me of her was hard to believe, and I was quite willing to see for myself, therefore I consented to do as he suggested. We reached the little home soon after sunrise, that morning, and found the family up and busied about the household cares and affairs of the little farm. Ina was seated in a chair before the fire when we entered, and as I was not a believer in the peculiar stories that had been

told of her and her malady, I merely nodded to her, after exchanging salutations with the others of the family and taking a seat that was offered me, addressing my conversation to Mr. Hayes whom I have known since a child, little thinking that I was soon to be an eye witness of one of the strangest scenes ever enacted by a human being, and the memory of which will linger with me as long as life endures. Suddenly Ina started up as if frightened at something that none of us could see or hear, her face first grew ghastly white and her lips purple, she uttered a low, wailing sound such as some animals do in distress; her eyes had a fixed stare as though she was gazing upon some horrible form without will power enough to close them and shut it out; the wailing sound deepened to a moan of pain; her pale cheeks became dyed with crimson as the blood rushed from her heart again; her arms fought the empty air as if either struggling for breath or to ward off the unseen enemy.

"I gazed at her intently, when suddenly, to my unutterable astonishment, I saw protruding from her lips and apparently held tight between her teeth, a small roll of cotton, tightly wound, and about as large as a man's thumb. As Marion Hayes reached out his hand and took the cotton from her mouth the paroxysm passed off, and she sank back in the chair as if exhausted. I was at first impressed with the belief that she had the cotton concealed in her mouth, and that what I had seen was only a bit of very clever acting in the slight-of-hand line. Knowing, however, that if she had held the cotton in her mouth for any considerable length of time that it would be wet, I immediately took it from his hand and examined it critically and carefully, expecting, of course, to find it wet. In this I confess I was disappointed. I found slight traces of saliva upon one end of the roll just as if it had come in

slight contact with the end of her tongue. Naturally I was surprised at this, but still could not quite put aside the thought that the cotton had been concealed in her mouth before we entered, and waited patiently for another spell, meanwhile watching her intently as I talked to Mr. Frank Hayes of the scene we had just witnessed, and asking further particulars regarding her, the frequency of the spells, etc. He told me that the one we had just witnessed was the only one she had had this morning, though another was liable to come on at any moment. Soon after breakfast was announced and we all sat down to the table. I had determined to keep my eye on her, and, if possible, detect her in the trick, if she was really playing a part. She ate as naturally as anybody, which could not be the case if there was anything concealed in her mouth, and she chewed her food and swallowed it without more effort than any one else would. I could best notice, too,

that her cheeks were sunken just as one might expect in a person suffering from poor health. Suddenly she sat down her coffee cup, and, almost without warning, a roll of cotton appeared in her mouth, and before any one could touch it, it fell from her lips into the coffee before her. She hurriedly left the table and sat down in another part of the room. While we were still talking of this last incident she arose and went to the water bucket and was in the act of taking a drink out of a large gourd that was used by the family as a dipper when once more, without warning, another roll of cotton fell from her lips, this time into the gourd of water in her hand.

“Of course all this being new to me, I took more interest in it than the others did, and made many inquiries about it, and was not a little surprised to see that still another paroxysm was coming on. This time Ina was afflicted in precisely the same manner as in the

first one we had witnessed. As before, Marion Hayes again took the roll of cotton from her lips when it appeared, and I immediately took it from his hand for examination and to look for evidences of water which I knew must have wet the cotton if it had been in her mouth when she was drinking out of the gourd. But again I was doomed to defeat, for as before, to my astonishment, the singular little roll was moist at one end only, just as it would be when the tongue comes in contact with it. I had watched her carefully, thinking to 'catch on to the racket,' but had signally failed and felt puzzled at the failure. The whole business was so peculiar that I concluded to probe it to the very bottom and satisfy myself, if possible, and accordingly asked a great many questions, especially regarding the means adopted for her relief. The family told me that an old Egyptian woman had told them that if Ina was carried over a stream of running water that she

would have no more of the spells, and that they had about decided to try the experiment and take her to some friends in Kentucky. The suggestion was made that our being there would afford a good opportunity for making the proposed journey, for they could have company on the road, Marion Hayes being a distant relative of theirs. Finally they concluded that it would be advisable, and at once began making preparations to go. While they were getting ready I once more began talking to Mr. Hayes, asking innumerable questions, but found him rather disposed to be reticent upon some parts of the subject, but think this was mainly caused by his belief that my mission was to discover if any slight-of-hand work was being indulged in by him or Ina, or if there was any collusion between them in this respect, just to satisfy my curiosity. On a subsequent visit, however, he talked more freely, and afforded me much information, giving me every

opportunity to investigate the case fully and freely.

“Finally the women of the household announced that they were ready to start, and we were soon on the road. While we were between the Hayes’ residence and Greenfield Ina was taken with another spell. She and her mother and Mrs. Hayes were in a buggy and Mr. Hayes and myself were walking in front of them. I did not see her have this spell, but knew that she did have it by the peculiar wailing, moaning sound I had heard her utter before. Turning around I asked what was the matter, and Ina said that she could see a strange looking woman beside the buggy. I looked carefully for such an apparition as she described, but could see no one but the three in the buggy. I saw no cotton at that time, but it must be said that we did not look for any, and it may have been there. There were no other manifestations between there and Greenfield, but there Ina said the strange apparition

got on the train when we did. And also that it got off with us when we reached the place we were to leave the cars.

"Ina attracted much attention at Greenfield, for many of the inhabitants had heard of her strange affliction, and the entrance of so many of us in a body was soon noised about the country village, and when the train came, the passengers were told that the "Cotton Girl" was there. Soon after we entered the cars, the other passengers gathered around asking a multitude of questions, and making comments upon the poor girl and her appearance. Among the passengers was a physician who, seating himself near, made many inquiries about her and seemed to take a great deal of interest in the case. Expressing a desire to see some of the cotton that had exuded from her person. I gave him a piece that I had preserved. He examined it carefully and intelligently, and pronounced it just like the natural

staple. He took some of it with him, and to the best of my recollection, he said he intended to have it analyzed.

"I have not seen as much of the case as many others with whom I have talked have, but what²I say I saw—I saw, and am willing to tell any one personally of what came under my observation, and be qualified to the statement if they desire it; or I am willing to write all I know regarding this case to any who write for the information, if they enclose stamps for return postage and address me, J. G. Jones, unningham, Carlisle county, Kentucky."

After the family had been in Kentucky long enough for the fact of her being there to be known she was visited by a great many persons, some of whom went away declaring that there was nothing unusual the matter with her, as they did not see any of the wonderful manifestations they had heard so much about, for the truth is there had been an improvement in

her health and she did not have many of the spells. However, she did have some of them, and cotton was not infrequently found in her room and in other parts of the house which could not be accounted for. As but little, if any, cotton is grown in that part of the country, quite a good many thought that while she remained there she would cease to be afflicted. But this is a mistake. She had and continues to have these spells occasionally.

When the family first reached Kentucky they stopped at the residence of one of their friends. Neither he nor any of his family had any faith in the truthfulness of the stories they had heard regarding Ina Hayes and her strange affliction; indeed, they doubted that the cotton they had heard of had any other existence than in the vivid imaginations of sensational gossips; yet on the very first night that she remained beneath their roof she had one of her strange spells, and an unusually large ball of

cotton was found adhering to her throat. On the following day, after she and her mother and grandmother had gone to the home of other friends, the family where they had passed the night, found at different times all during the day, large rolls and balls of cotton scattered in various places about their home—even on floors which had been swept only a few moments before—showing that the influence which caused the fibre to make its appearance on the girl's person still made its presence manifested in the dwelling even after she had gone elsewhere. The family told me afterward that there was no cotton on their place except a small quantity which the lady of the house had left over after padding a quilt, and even that was packed away in a trunk in an upper room, and none of the family even knew of its existence except the lady herself. The mysterious cotton, however, continued to be found about the house, on the freshly swept floors,

and even in closets for several days, and then ceased as suddenly as it had commenced.

Meanwhile the girl had no spells, her health began to improve as has been told and a much longer period elapsed between times than ever before. Her mother began to hope that she was going to get well, as the old Egyptian woman had said she would. But, alas! her hopes were doomed to disappointment; all their fond anticipations and cherished plans of happiness that should ensue when Ina was fully restored to health and freed from the malign influence of witchery, were crushed, and once more they were plunged into the depths of despair for when the cotton ceased making its appearance in the house of the friends with whom they stopped the first night she was again afflicted and the horrid spells came back apparently with renewed energy.

Now comes one of the strangest features of this more than strange history. It will be

remembered that when she was first afflicted her feet were drawn and distorted in a wonderfully peculiar manner, and this fact had caused her no little inconvenience and actual trouble. One night quite recently she awoke her mother and told her that the apparition had made its material presence known, taking on the form of a large cat, which, pouncing upon one of her crooked feet, had straightened it out to its normal shape again. Then ensued a spell of unusual severity, which in due time passed off, only to be succeeded by another, in which another cat-like form was seen by her, and the remaining foot was straightened, and both have remained straight ever since, though the paroxysms continue to be monotonously regular, and the cotton continues to make its appearance on her throat. "Will she ever get well?" is now a question anxiously asked by all those whose happiness depend upon her recovery. "Is she a spiritualist, a medium of rare but as

yet undeveloped power?" is asked by those who are convinced that all that has happened to her is caused by some supernatural power. "Is she an impostor, who has been playing tricks and imposing upon the credulity of the people and has so far escaped detection?" ask the skeptics, or really under the witchcraft power and influence of the woman who lives in Gibson county? Who can tell?

That some unseen power acts in this case cannot be doubted. For weeks the girl has been confined to her bed, fading away to a mere shadow of her former self and suffering the greatest physical and mental agony. There seems no human relief for her and what the result will be, no man knoweth. All who have seen the girl, watched her suffering, noticed her wonderful faculty for hearing noises at great distances and seen the fleecy cotton that appears on her throat, pronounce it the greatest wonder of the nineteenth century. The

threats of an evil woman who vowed to wreck a terrible vengeance upon her are recalled by her friends and some are ready to believe that she not only has the power to do so, but is actually putting the awful threat into execution.

It is unnecessary to tell the readers of this little book that witchcraft is nothing new. For ages and ages people have believed in its existence. A witch is a person supposed to have formed a compact with Satan, and the practice of the powers thereby acquired. The term witch, though applied to both sexes; in strictness denotes a female, wizard being the appropriate term for a male. The belief in witches, as formerly entertained in Christian countries, supposed Satan to be in rebellion against God and in warfare against the church, and to exercise his marvelous influence through the agency of human beings, who by formal compact had agreed to become his subjects.

and to serve him. Such persons became possessed of supernatural powers, including the ability to injure others, to read their thoughts, to call up the spirits of the dead; to transform themselves into the likeness of animals, to be present in apparition at a distance from the actual locality of their bodies; to fascinate, by a look, etc. They were supposed to bear upon their bodies a "witch mark," affixed by Satan, which was known by the point where it was made becoming callous and dead. At the time of the settlement of the country the belief in witches was general, and unknown diseases extraordinary occurrences, or circumstances not explainable on known theories, were commonly attributed to the influence of the devil and the agency of witches. Witchcraft was regarded as the blackest of crimes, and the punishment of death was inflicted on persons convicted of it. Several persons were executed as witches in Massachusetts prior to

the extraordinary outburst at Salem. The latest instance has been the hanging of an Irish woman in Boston in 1638, accused of bewitching four children belonging to the family of a Mr. Goodwin. During the winter of 1691-'2 a company consisting mostly of young girls, was in the habit of meeting at the house of a clergyman, Mr Parris, in Salem Village (now Danvers Centre), for the purpose of practising the arts of necromancy, magic, &c. They soon began to exhibit strange actions, exclamations, and contortions, at times being seized with spasms, dropping insensible to the floor, or writhing in agony. The village physician declared the children bewitched, an opinion in which a council of the neighboring clergymen, including Mr. Parris, concurred? Being pressed to make known who had bewitched them, the girls first accused an Indian woman named Tītuba, a servant of Mr. Parris; Sarah Good, a woman of ill repute; and Sarah Osburn, who

was bedridden. They were brought before the magistrate for examination on March 1, 1692. the excitement became extreme, and spread through the neighboring country; others were accused, and the most eminent clergymen and laymen encouraged the prosecution, in the belief that Satan was making a special effort to gain the victory over the saints. But few had the courage to resist the delusion. A special court of oyer and terminer was appointed for the hearing of the cases, but the trials were a mere mockery. It opened at Salem of the first week of June, and several sessions were held, the last opening on Sept. 9. Nineteen persons, among them some of the most pious and reputable citizens, were hanged, the first execution occurring in June the last in September. Six were men, including one clergyman, and thirteen were women. Giles Corey, a man upwards of 80 years of age, for refusing to plead, was pressed to death. A reaction in public

sentiment now began to set in, and through a court held in January, 1693, three persons were condemned, no more executions took place; and in May the governor discharged all then in jail, to the number, it is said, of 150. Mr. Parris, who had been one of the most zealous prosecutors, was dismissed by his church in 1696, although he acknowledged his error.

Cotton Mather, a name that seems appropriate to use in this book descriptive of the "Cotton Girl," was a famous preacher who died in Boston in 1728. He was a believer in witchcraft, and published a book entitled "Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions," narrating cases which had occurred at intervals in different parts of the country, which was used as an authority in the prosecution of the "Salem tragedy." When the children of John Goodwin were strangely affected in 1688 he was one of the four ministers of Boston who held a day of fasting and

prayer, and favored the suspicion of diabolical visitation. He afterward took the eldest daughter of his house in order to inspect the spiritual and physiological phenomena of witchcraft, and his experiments are wonderful instances of curiosity and credulity. He discovered that the devils were familiar with the Greek, Latin and Hebrew, but seemed less skilled in the Indian languages, suspected that they were not all alike sagacious, and was persuaded that he himself was shielded against their power by special protection of Heaven. A discourse, in which he pronounced witchcraft 'the most nefarious high treason against the Majesty on high,' was printed with a copious narrative of his recent researches, and the particulars reprinted in London with a preface by Richard Baxter. When the first phenomena occurred at Salem in 1692 he at once became a prominent adviser concerning them, expressing his

eagerness "to lift up a standard against the infernal enemy," whose assaults upon the country he regarded as "a particular defiance upon my poor endeavors to bring the souls of man unto Heaven;" and in order to convince all who doubted the obsessions and disapproved of the executions, he wrote his "Wonders of the invisible World" (1692) which received the approbation of the president of Harvard college and of the governor of the state, though it was designed to encourage the excesses and to promote "a pious thankfulness to God for justice being so far executed among us." When the reaction in the popular mind followed he vainly attempted to arrest it, and though he afterward admitted that "there had been a going too far in the affair," he never expressed regret for the innocent blood that had been shed, and charged the responsibility upon the powers of darkness. Finally he sought to shun the odium of the popular feeling by declaring the subject "too

dark and deep for ordinary comprehension," and referring it for decision to the day of judgment.

Be this all as it may (and no human being can say positively that the manifestations recounted in the preceding pages are untrue) this case is certainly new for modern times, and Ina Hayes and all who are connected with the wonderful story will go into the pages of history set apart for unexplainable events and become a part of this great nation's productions of the marvelous. Sensible, conservative people are slow to express their opinions either for or against any grave question. They are willing to study it in all its phases, and look at it from various standpoints, sitting deductions until they are able to arrive at a rational conclusion, and then having announced that decision, adhere to it through good and evil repute. It is only those who are wise in their own conceit that make the greatest ado over what they are

pleased to call the weakness and credulity of others. Lacking the moral courage, and, perhaps, the industry, to seek for themselves they make haste to cast odium upon anything they cannot understand, thinking, like the ostrich, who banishes its enemies from its sight by burying its head in the sand, that if they can not see what is going on, no one else can either, while investigating minds stand forth as living monuments of the poetical truths—

“Few and precious are the words which the lips of wisdom utter.”

And on the other hand it is forcibly illustrated by the old saying—

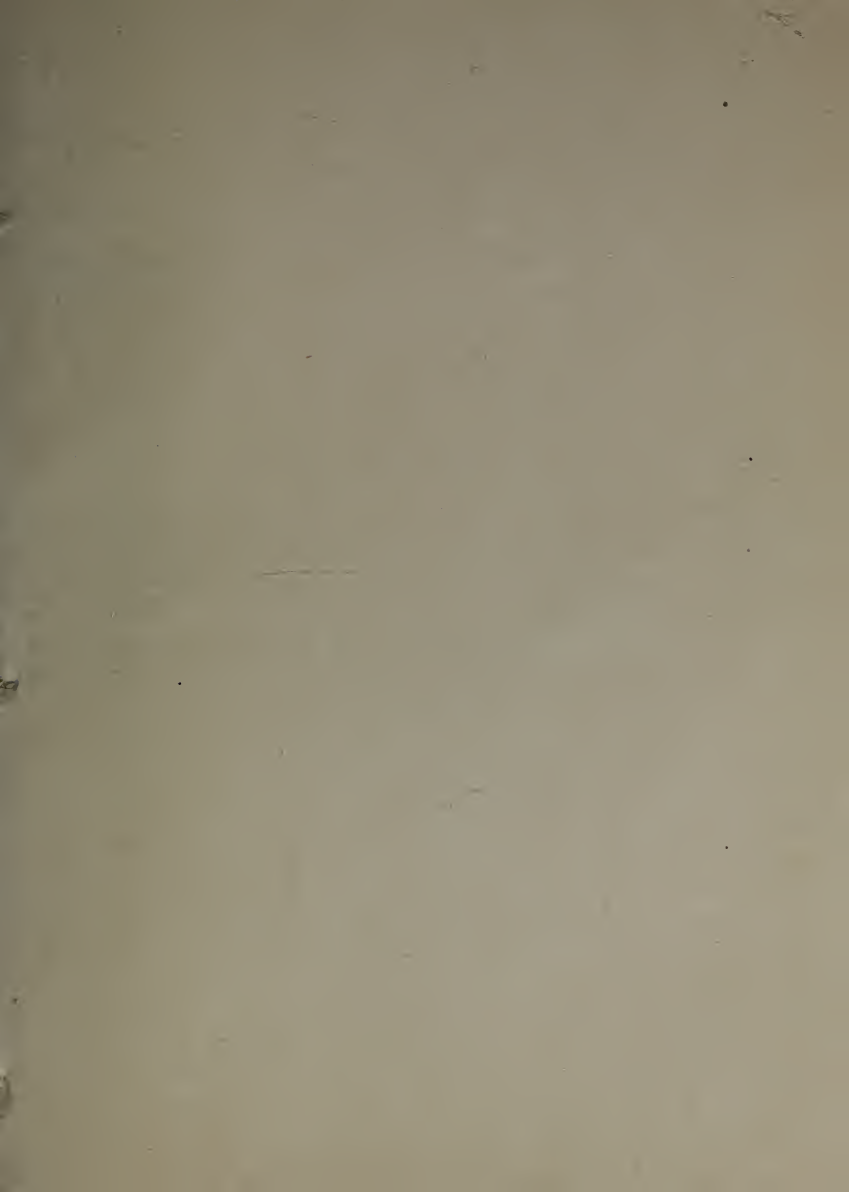
“They most assume who know the least.”

Ever since the mysterious words, written with a pen of fire upon the walls of the palace of the King of Persia, were deciphered and interpreted to foretell the destruction of and death of the King, the world has been more or less inclined to a belief in spiritualism. It will

not do to say that only the weak-minded, those who are easily influenced by others or those who see but cannot understand believed in this, believed in it with the Fox Sisters, or believers in it now when confronted with the facts regarding Ina Hayes.

Some of the greatest names the world has ever known believed that spirits, good and bad, had power to come to earth again and cheer or afflict their friends or enemies. Napoleon believed it. One of the most eminent Chief Justices of the United States Supreme Court believed it, and was guided in some of his most intricate and notable decisions by good and evil spirits.

Many who have seen Ina Hayes believe it, and after a careful perusal of the foregoing pages, the author confidently believes that the reader will give the whole subject a careful and impartial investigation, and then draw his own conclusion.





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